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Fall 2002



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PARNASSUS

FALL 2002

Inter-Arts Magazine
of Northern Essex Community College
Haverhill, Massachusetts 01830

PARNASSUS IS THE NAME OF THE
MYTHOLOGICAL MOUNTAIN HOME OF
THE NINE MUSES WHO INSPIRED
HUMANKIND IN THE ARTS.

The policy of the editorial staff has been to select material for the magazine democratically.

We have read each work submitted and viewed all artwork.

We voted to determine eligibility; a majority vote for a piece meant publication.

Parnassus provides an opportunity for new artists and writers to reach others;
it's a showcase of Northern Essex Community College student creativity.

PARNASSUS PROFILE

AMY GIRARD

Photograph on Covers and Photograph on page 2

In June of 2002, Amy Girard took an Introduction to Photography class to fulfill a humanities elective towards her nursing degree. This course has changed her life! She is now considering a career in photography. The inspiration for her cover photograph comes from her childhood memories of dressing up in her mother's clothes. Her son, Quentin, age three, is the little boy in the picture, and her friend's daughter, Sidney, age seven, is the little girl. Amy says she "dressed them up in adult clothes and started to shoot." She had a lot of fun taking the pictures and she hopes that people who view her photograph will "hit some kind of emotion."



AMY GIRARD

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Covers	photograph	Amy Girard	
1	Parnassus Profile	Amy Girard	
2	photograph	Amy Girard	
4	The Vivid Essence	short story	Isa Rivera
5		graphic	Allison Asselin
6		computer collage	Melissa Horton
7		b/w graphic	Jon Totman
7	Eyes of Constellation	poem	Joshua Therrien
8	The Cowboy	poem	Kate Warden
8		ink drawing	Gail Riley
9		hand-drawn/computer image	Robert Mendoza
10	A Birthday Poem	poem	Paul Melendy
11		colored pencil drawing	M. Nazzaro
12	Insatiable	poem	Joshua Therrien
13		photograph	Deirdra Moseley
14		charcoal drawing	Christina Eldridge
15	Shadows and Light Refracting	poem	Michele Williams Hudson
15		photograph	Christie Gymziak
16	"Roxies" flashed across...	short story	Andy Faraci
17		ink drawing	William Ormaza
20		pencil drawing	Julian Valencia
22	To a Beautiful Person Like Me	poem	Sandra Alicea
23		photograph	Betsabel Soto
24	Moonlit Night	poem	Patrick Ryan
24	"Surreality Hell?"	pen sketch	Pete Isherwood
25		photograph	Taina Vargas
26		photograph	Sarah Raffenello
26	In the Eyes of the Beholder	poem	Jillian Harlow
27	Want	poem	Bryan Burns-Fedele
27		photograph	Tina Marcella
28		photograph	Khaki McElfresh
29	Place me no more ...	poem	Paul Melendy
30	The Empty Church	poem	Patrick Ryan
31	Seven Minutes	poem	Cristine M. DiMario
32	Like a Rose	poem	Wesley Bitomski
33		pencil drawing	Stacie Peters
34	Tomorrow	poem	Anthony Gan
34	Clown of the Hour	poem	Anthony Gan
35	Winter	poem	Erin Mulcahy
35	The October afternoon ...	poem	Dan Copeland
35	The thawing of the land...	poem	Dan Copeland
35		charcoal sketch	Unknown
36	The Boy Who Never Cried "Wolf!"	short story	Linda Novotny
37		b/w graphic	David Michel
39		pen & ink drawing	Jonathan Hebert
39		pen & ink drawing	Elvin Fabian
40		charcoal drawing	Jeanne Dunnigan

THE VIVID
ESSENCE,
THE ROOTS
OF A PUERTO
RICAN WOMAN
TRANSFORMED
INTO ONE
SINGLE
SILENT BODY,
ONE SINGLE
SILENT SALUTE

by Isa Rivera

I am the daughter of the blue sky above me on a bright clear day that along with it brings the sweet lovable melody of the birds singing in the morning, I am the daughter of the sky in the night, full of bright stars lighting up everything that is above its feet, I am daughter of the moonshine with a strong bright and clearly lit night, I am the daughter of the sun that with his strong rays brightens and warms up everything that surrounds him, I am the daughter of the ocean that deep within itself beholds his most precious and deepest secrets, I am the daughter of ocean waves hitting themselves against the rocks and that by doing so produces a celestial, sound, melody, I am the daughter of the palm trees that with their rhythmic dance float back and forth as the wind gently wraps its arms around them, I am the daughter of the sun rays, as the rooster sings and tunes his melody announcing that the morning is arriving, I am the daughter of the sunset settling down announcing that the night is coming, I am the daughter of the sand from which deep within arouses seashells that slowly make their way to the surface at the seashore, I am the daughter of the wet sand smell, mixed with the smell of salt that comes from the seashore, and the smell of fresh fish caught in a fish net after a long, hot, tiring fishing day, I am the daughter of the dolphins, sea horses, and the starfish found in the profundities of the ocean, I am the daughter of a garden full of pink roses blossoming during spring, I am intense as a hurricane during hurricane season and as calm as the breeze swaying back and forth, and also as calm as a cascade falling slowly into the arms of a river, as a white female horse galloping across planets, river streams, and up and down light green mountains, I am the daughter of Chihuahuas, I am the daughter of the incomparable and unforgettable favorite taste of the Puerto Rican food still in my mouth today, I am daughter of the sweet taste of chocolate, I am the daughter of the mangos, the bananas, the grapes, the cantaloupes, and the aguacates, I am the daughter of the drums that with their beat, sound pum- , pum takes over the entire place as they are played, I am the daughter of rhythm, and the Latin beat, I am the daughter of the Puerto-Rican folclorical dances La Bomba (The Bomb), La Pieria (The Plain), I am

the daughter of the colors of the Puerto Rican banner, red, white, and blue, I am the daughter of the Puerto Rican national anthem, La Borinquenia, I am the daughter of the Puerto Rican national symbol that has a sheep in the middle that symbolizes Peace, I am the daughter of the Puerto Rican national/international symbol El Coqui, I am the daughter of the San Juan fort El Marro, I am the daughter of the curves of a guitar, I am the daughter the parandas, Puerto Rican Christmas carols,



I am the daughter of humbleness, harmony, peace, love, passion, and deja-vu, also mystical things, I am the daughter of light brown eyes, golden caramel skin, and curly black hair, girl going wild along the beach, I am the daughter of sensuality and sexuality all beheld in one single body, I am the daughter of the body that someday will be blessed with the being of motherhood very deep within her, I am the daughter of the Yin and Yan, I am the daughter of Venus and Mars, I am the daughter of my ancestors, I am the daughter of Puerto Rico, Spain, India and Africa, I am the daughter of my father's sperm, I am the daughter of my mother's hope, I am the daughter of the spirit of Light, God, who took love and transformed it into my existence, I am the daughter of an angel who magically blew me in the form of a kiss into my mother's body, I am the daughter of the images of a newborn baby, I am the daughter of the maturity and wisdom of an old person who has already walked life's long journey, I am the daughter of a little place full of laughter, Puerto Rico, I am the daughter of the longing for my native home, Puerto Rico, I am the daughter of the promise of

someday retiring to my place of birth, Puerto Rico, a little tropical island I once left behind, I am the daughter of the jibarita (Puerto Rican country girl), the daughter of the Puerto Rican hard working people, I am the daughter of being a fan of Ricky Martin, once former member of the most famous ever Puerto Rican pop group once formally known as Menudo, I am the daughter of forgiven costumes, I am the daughter of the Latin language, Ay Bendito Nena which means Poor Girl, a daily common phase in the language and the way of speaking for Puerto Ricans, I am the daughter of the daily common What's Up Girl in the American language, I am the daughter/face of Cerebral Palsy more commonly known as C. P., I am as delicate, fragile, and gentle as one single pink rose. I am the beauty within myself, I am simply a woman, I am the daughter of the tropical, I am the symbol of the Caribbean sea, I know who I am, do you, because I am honor, and proud to be who I am, I am me, a Puerto Rican woman.

MELISSA HORTON





JON TOTMAN

The Eyes, your eyes, are universes.
Where stars are born and take shape,
Passion explodes in each new collapse.
And darkness gives way to light.

Each has its own milky way,
Attractions of great mystery,
And black holes, known to capture
All it sees, even attention.

They can give off warmth
To melt the cold attitude,
The arctic disposition.
They create Life and Hope.

Looking into the eyes which radiate,
No surprise in how they captivate.

EYES OF CONSTELLATION

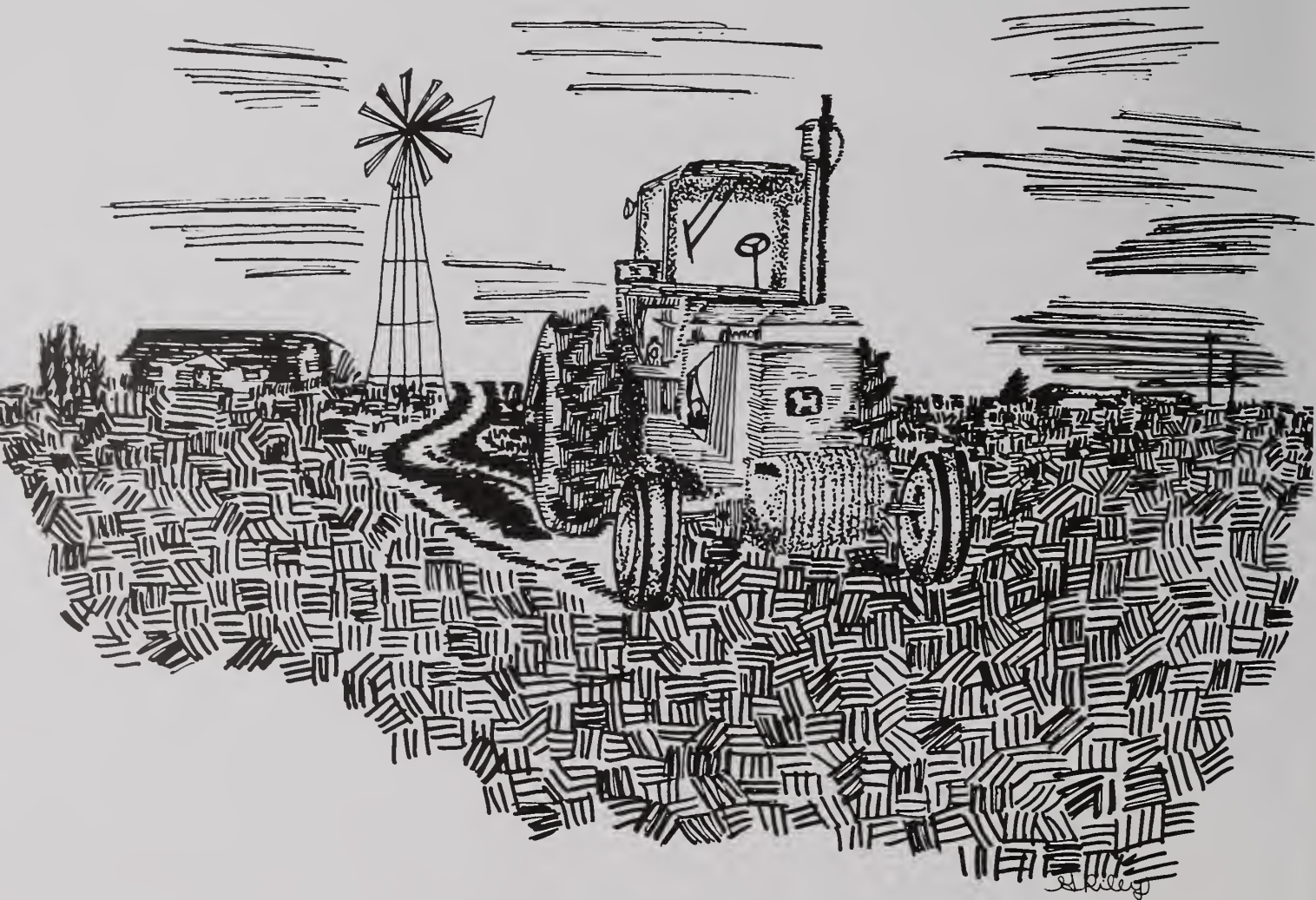
by Joshua Therrien

All blues and bones, bandaged in weathered clothes.
Delicate pins adorned the bandana 'round his
cream colored cowboy hat.
100's burned between long arthritic fingers.

He told me about his leather boots.
He told me about Peruvian cocaine.
He told me he could give me anything I needed, but I didn't
need much.
Just like him, I needed somebody to talk to.

THE COWBOY

by Kate Warden



GAIL RILEY



ROBERT MENDOZA

I wandered today to a stream by a shore
Past a hill, a small rock, a few tufts of grass or more
The air today seemed light and away strings could be heard
Could today be different? There seemed extra birds...

Continuing on, by the, stream I still stood
When up popped a crab with a tiny crab hood.
The hood was there garnished with a motley of colors
And it looked like it cost a great sum of crab dollars.

With a gurgle in his throat and a crack of his claws
The small crab began to speak, for he had a just cause.
"Do you," he began, "know what's today?"
I thought about the month and nay was it May

Or January, April, October, September
August, March, November, December?
It wasn't June or July, for those I'd remember.

There's only one, left-February!" I exclaimed.
And as soon as I said it, it began to pour rain,
And it rained and it rained and oh how it rained.
The drops were so chubby they pummeled my brain
But the small crab went on all just the same.

"Today's special, " he grinned, his antennae off course.
"It's a prince of all days, a day of a source."
"But what source, may I ask, if you could please follow through?"
"Not at all," foamed the crab. "But it's not what, it is who."

"It's Jenn's Birthday, Pauly boy! It all ends tonight!"
How could I forgot? The insane crab was right!
I had wasted the day walking far and away
While lonely Jenn soaked on her rainy Birthday.

I wept and I wept. "What a friend here, I am!
I have nothing to give but the shake of my hand.
All the stores are now closed , not that I could afford—
See I spent all my money on my Honda Accord."

"I have an answer, my friend," the crab laughed in his throat.
"You see this hood I have here- it comes with this coat."
"That's a down-right nice coat, but it won't fit this girl.
For you're just a crab and to you she's the world."

"Do not give a thought to that notion, dear human friend Paul.
You worry too much, for one size here fits all.
Do not scoff at this coat, or think me insane!
For this coat keeps you dry in the rainiest of rains."

A BIRTHDAY POEM

by Paul Melendy

The stout crab was right, he was dry as his humour.
White rain sprayed me more and more, drops hit him fewer.
"Again don't take this crab's vestment lightly, it's not one to belittle.
But to gain this magic item, you must first answer a riddle."

Then he shot a queer look, that struck me quite funny.
Then he hopped and he squeaked, this crab looked like a bunny.
"Guess my crab name and the coat will be yours.
Guess wrongly, Pauly my boy, and I'll sink to the floor."

As the crab pranced all around with a smile most unpleasant,
I realized how much I wanted that present.
Then suddenly, as if struck, an epiphany I had,
But the answer I found had made me quite mad.

"It's a trick question, you crabby old crab!
Crabs don't have names - if they do, they belong in a lab!"
The crab then stopped dancing and turned around sharply.
Bubbles foamed at his mouth, his only words: "Blarrply."

The coat slipped off nicely, and I picked it up quick.
As I grasped it in hands, it began to grow thick;
It grew to my size and felt warm to the touch.
I turned to the naked crab, "Thank you very much!"

I kicked my tall heels and ran away from the stream
Past the hill, and the rock, and the tufts that were green
I ran into town, still soaked to the bone;
I ran to her house, su casa, her home.

She was standing outside, in the rain I might add.
And as I rushed up, my heart became glad:
"Happy Birthday!" I screamed. "Here is your cool present.
It'll protect you from rain and it's warm as a pheasant."

As I handed her the gift she smiled and we hugged.
"I don't need a gift, Paul," and at that I just shrugged.
"A birthday is meant to be spent with good friends,
Not to go out and get presents and spend, spend, spend,
spend!"

At that the coat shrank, back to its crab size,
I tossed it to the ground, yelled, "Behold, look! The sky!"
And our heads craned upward and the clouds cleared
away,
Out came the bright sun, the rain ceased for today.

We strolled off to the stream, past the hills, and the rock.
I told her the story of the crab as we walked.
I glanced back at the spot where the dry coat now lay,
And there was the crab claiming back his small claim.



M. NAZZARO

Unquenched thirst,
Unexplored seas,
Forbidden lands
And hidden secrets.

These all hold
But a candle
To the never-ending
Desire to be fulfilled.

The eternal drive
For knowledge,
And the inescapable
Pull towards growth.

A culture's history
Waiting to be relived,
A timeless void
Still needing exploration.

INSATIABLE

by Joshua Therrien



DEIRDRA MOSELEY



CHRISTINA ELDRIDGE

Illustration
7/10/18

The languid power of shadow
Whispers of sweet black death

We dream of music
Raw with life

Yet worship an elaborate symphony
Devoid of the essential power
& delight

Why ache in bitter need?
And live an eternity in silent sullen winter?
When the diamond of love lies waiting
To refract the light in the true heart of a friend

SHADOWS

AND LIGHT REFRACTING

by Michele Williams Hudson

CHRISTIE GYMZIAK



“ROXIES” flashed across the neon billboard above the building, advertising its name for all to see. A loud heavy techno beat pounded from within, out into the street beyond. Street kids milled around it, smoking, drinking, and talking it up. In front of it all was a bouncer, but that was about it for actual visible protection into and out of the club.

L.b. smiled from across the street, on top of a nearby building. “Looks easy enough.” She took a sip from her thermos. “I mean, only a bouncer? With what we know is in there?” The radio crackled as she lowered the thermos in one hand and a pair of binoculars up in the other.

“Uh huh, which is why we’re being careful about this. ‘Flashy is obvious’ as Silk used to say to me,” came Kimi’s voice over it. She was down in the crowd itself, waiting to get in. She turned to look up at where she knew L.b. was hiding out.

L.b. giggled. “Talk about flashy, speak for yourself hot stuff. Yum!” Kimi blushed; she was out of her element tonight. A low cut dress showed off her cleavage (which she was kinda shy about, having never been particularly proud of it) and a slit up the side showed off long, thin legs clad in heels. With her hair done up and masses of jewelry on her, she was the equivalent of a walking “Screw Me” sign. “Remind me to ask to see you like that some night!” L.b. giggled again.

“Stop it. You should be the one down here dressed like a tramp, not me.” She shook her head and shivered a little. “It’s damned cold down here, and I’m better at sneaking around.”

“You lost the straws Kimi. Just worry about being the backup plan.” She sipped some more from her thermos and set it down again. “And show some more leg! Woohoo!”

Kimi smiled devilishly and lifted the hem of the skirt a little. “Satisfied?” A low whistle from the other radio answered her question. She grinned and reached towards her ear. “I’m going in. Signal me if you need help.” She plucked the earpiece out and put it in her pocketbook. She smiled flirtingly at the bouncer, who efficiently patted her down and let

her into the club. With one last look up, she submerged deeply into the crowd inside.

“Time to fly then.” L.b. took the mike set off and put it into the fetish bag set down near her, and began to stretch out. She slid the bag around her waist and took off the jacket, breathed deeply, and ran straight at the edge of the building, leaping off at the last moment, sliding into the cool, sleek raven form. She cawed loudly and flew towards the dance club.

They’d spotted the cracked window earlier, scouting out the area. They’d decided it was the best entry way in and out. She silently flew in between the shattered panes of glass and landed quietly, shifting back into homid form, checking her equipment. She looked around, figuring that it was safe and crept down the hallway towards her goal.

The techno stuff was too damned loud for Kimi’s taste; she hated poppy trash. Give her something with a more downbeat vibe to it, something softer and gentler. She yawned, glanced around the building, and waited for something to happen.

L.b. had made it. The security had been relatively tight, but it wasn’t like it had been impossible. They probably relied on the club more than they did the guards, but she did sense that there were more to them than they let on. She slid her laptop out of the bag and hooked it up to the terminal in front of her, tapping on the keys quickly.

A loud noise out in the hallway startled her and shook her attention away from what she’d been doing. “Great. Now what?” She pushed a button on the laptop, slipped in back into the bag, and shifted into corvid form once more. She sighed and hopped up into the rafters of the room, waiting to see what was up.

continued on page 18



WILLIAM ORMAZA

Kimi yawned again and shook the cup of ice in her hand, smiling bored-like at the guys trying to be discreet about checking her out. She glanced at the clock on the wall; L.b. should have most of what she needed by now, and was probably getting ready to leave. She tapped her delicate fingers against her arms, impatient. That's when she felt the gentle buzzing in her purse, the warning beeper she'd insisted L.b. take with her. It meant that something was going on upstairs.

She smiled at the bartender again and slid off of the chair, putting the buzzer back into her purse and removing what looked like a plastic Katakana out in its stead. She walked out the front door...

"Great."

The loud noise in the hall was a group of punks storming the place. The last guard that had stood in their way had been thrown bodily into the room, breaking his neck against the side of a table. Blood pooled around his empty skull.

"Nice arm there Burke! Good job!" one of the five walking in crowed, patting a big one on the back. He grunted. "My little league days." They all laughed and walked all the way into the room, towards the armored vault in the back. They chatted while one worked his way around the locks.

L.b. was stuck. She couldn't fly out of here; she needed what was in that computer. But there were these dumbasses in the way, trying to get something completely different than she was. Plus, they looked like they were going to trash what she needed!

There was a cough out in the hallway. "I can't believe it. I get called in here to stop some petty robbers?" Kimi walked into light of the room and shook her head. "This isn't even worth the time."

"You lost sweetie?" one of them asked, a small light looking kid with lots of tattoos and piercings. "Pretty little girls should know when to keep their pretty little noses out of other people's business."

Kimi's eyes narrowed. No one had ever called her a "pretty little girl" and gotten away with it. "Where's my friend?" L.b. could see Kimi's mother's sword reflecting in the light. This was getting better and better. She mentally sighed and resigned herself to her fate.

"What the hell are you threatening us with? Gonna snap our necks with those dainty little...urk!" His neck snapped as wrapped hands were put around it. "Didn't your daddy ever teach you to speak proper around ladies?" L.b. said, brushing her hands over the now dead body.

"Oi! She just killed Surge!" yelled another one.

"Wow, figured that all out on your own? I'm impressed!" She dodged to the side as one charged her with his fists clenched and tripped him as he went by, breaking his leg as he went down. Kimi ducked and sidestepped another charger, hitting him in the back of the knees with a slash and finishing him off with a quick back strike to his neck. His head rolled onto the floor wetly, his eyes staring blankly.

The remaining few grimaced, readied to charge and attack. Burke had ripped the vault door off in anger and was clutching the bags of money to his chest. "Screw 'em! Let's get out of here!" He punched a hole in the floor of the room and jumped down. The rest followed him, the last flipping them both the bird as he went down.

L.b. had pulled her laptop back out of the bag and had hooked it back up. "Go Kimi, I know you want to. I'll finish this up and I'll meet up with you down there." Kimi brushed a strand of loose hair out of her face as she finished off the one with the broken leg. "Okay." She straightened herself up and jumped down the hole towards the sound of gunfire and screaming.

continued on next page

They met her further into the club. One was using a table leg as a huge club and was charging her with it, swinging it in the air as he charged her. He was good; she'd give him that. The way he handled the heavy piece positively screamed it. He swung hard and hit her side, throwing her into a nearby table and scaring the couple sitting at it out of their chairs. She scowled and reversed her blade, holding the sharp edge away from him.

That's when the other hit her from behind with a chair, stunning her. "Bitch is gonna die!" he sang as he hit her again and again with it. The other came over and was laughing, grabbing her by her legs and throwing her into another table. Kimi could do nothing; she was in too much pain by this point to even try to put up a defense to it.

L.b. chewed on her lip as she watched the last of the file slowly, inchworm-like, downloading itself onto her laptop. She'd been tapping her fingers madly, unconsciously hoping that it would help make the file go quicker. "Come on, come on..." She'd apparently also been tapping her foot against it too.

With a short little ding, the download was complete. "Yes!" She popped the connection and slid the light little computer into her fetish bag once more. "Time to go help Kimi."

"Not so tough now, are you?" Burke had leaned down to face her, bloodied and bruised. "Where's your tough words now?" He laughed and threw her against another wall. "Let's just see how much fun you can be." He stopped laughing when a fist smacked him in the face.

"Leave her alone." L.b. stood there, the dead bodies of his two remaining cohorts lying broken across two tables. She stood in the ready position that Kimi had taught her, soft fire in her eyes. Kimi sighed thankfully and closed her eyes, murmuring something in Japanese.

"Why do you care? She's just a broken bitch. You let me go,"

"Not gonna happen after what you did to my sister." She charged him again, but changed her tactic, jumping into the air and plunging two razor-sharp feathers into his eyes. He screamed in pain; she fell to the ground and kicked upwards, into his groin. He moaned and fell back to the ground, his back slamming against the heavy concrete of the dance floor, dust kicking up around him.

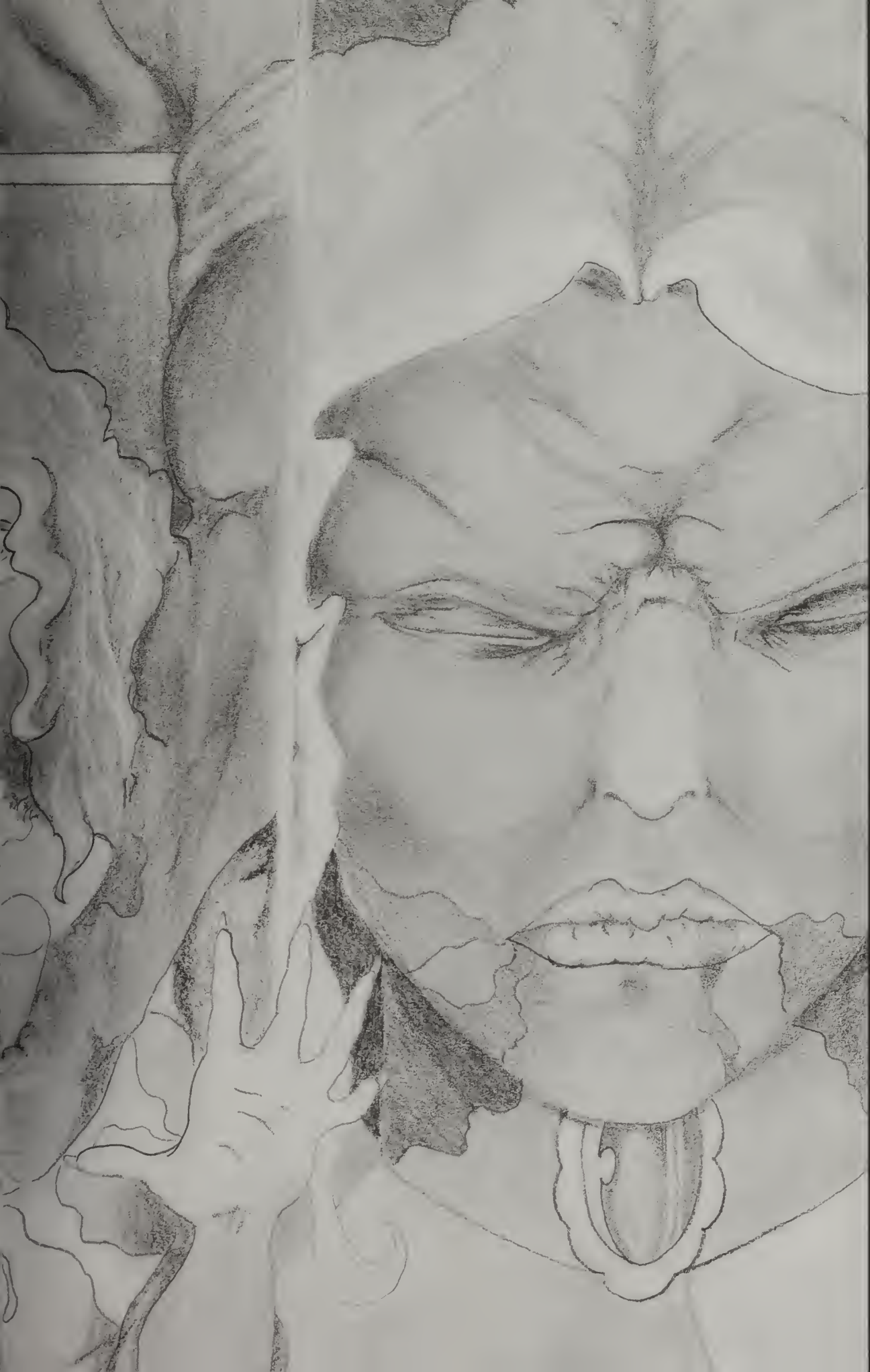
He was back up in moments, the feathers still stuck in his eyes. "I'll rip you in two!" He rushed towards her and grabbed her quite hard, squishing her, pressing her against him. She screamed in pain as she felt her light bones cracking under the pressure. "Grrr....AHHH!" She kicked him in the chest hard and punched both of her fists down on his neck. He screamed and threw her against the ground; hit it hard.

She rolled to the side, kicked out, striking him in the ankle, bringing him down once more. She tackled him, punching him as hard as she could in the face, until she was sure he was either dead or just very unconscious. She rolled off of him wearily and hit the ground, groaning and breathing hard. She went over to Kimi, lying there smirking, and pulled her to her feet. The two looked around the destroyed dance hall, blood, gunshots, and bodies scattered everywhere.

"So. Got plans for tomorrow night, sexy?" L.b. asked with a grin.

by Andy Faraci





TO A BEAUTIFUL PERSON LIKE ME

If God had a refrigerator,
my picture would be on it.

If He had a wallet,
my photo would be in it.

He sends me flowers
every spring.

by Sandra Alicea

He sends me a sunrise
every morning.

Whenever I want to talk,
He listens.

He can live anywhere in the universe,
but He chose ... my heart.

Face it -He is crazy about ME!
God didn't promise days without pain,
laughter without sorrow, sun without rain,
but He did promise strength for the day,
comfort for the tears, and light for the way.



BETSABEL SOTO

Lie back on your bed swept deep into the safety of your lover's warm embrace
Lost light, darkness rolls out the carpet for a scene of transgression,
Feel the pull of the night like curiosity's lips caressing you to thoughts of days past
Childhood dreams
Lie back eyes adjusted to the moonlit sky

Black silken shadows flow over the room like the deep ocean currents sliding through the
window and smothering all that remains of the day
Shrouds of night thrown over your world turning familiar faces to those of strangers
Think of when life was simple when you lost yourself in the consistency of life
Feel better instantly, all troubles washed away on deep beautiful eyes and never-ending
smiles lose yourself in talk of the future not realizing the importance of these times till
they're gone

Opportunities lost chances never taken
Lost in memory, crack a smile
Remember her
Forever lost to the moonlit night.

MOONLIT NIGHT

by Patrick Ryan

"SURREALITY HELL?"
PETE ISHERWOOD





TAINA VARGAS



SARAH RAFFENELLO

In the eye, lies the beauty;
In the heart, hides the jealousy
Where sadness breeds hate.

False diamond particles of truth and love
With which the keys of an organ
Sing incorrect lines of joy.

Here, the pen writes the trees,
In a forest of bitterness.
Desolate in its faded greenery,

Where fibers of depression cling
To the light of hope and happiness.
All in the eyes of the beholder.

IN THE EYES OF THE BEHOLDER

by Jillian Harlow

What does it feel like
To be so close to something you want,
So close you can taste it on your lips,
And yet no closer to attaining it
As you would be to caressing the moon?
You imagine what it would feel like,
Stroking that cool, white face,
Learning all of its mystery
In the slow, intimate pass of your finger tips.
You can picture holding it in your hand,
Smooth and perfect,
And letting the world see.
Look.
I have attained it.
See what I have.
You can see all of it in your mind,
In your heart,
But you do not have it.
No satisfaction quenching this desire,
Your wants tormenting you for your lacking.
And so, you have the choice.
Continue to writhe in this sweet,
Tender agony of wanting,
An excruciating eternity of regret.
Or reach out your hand.
Step to the edge, and further.
Risk the fall, and see if you can hold the moon.
You can already taste it on your lips.
Isn't it worth it?

WANT

by Bryan Burns-Fedele

TINA MARCELLA





KHAKI McELFRESH

Place me no more in cold, dark studies
Where only whispers dwell
Give me instead an X-Box controller:
The antithesis of Hell
Give me no more everlasting homework
Or papers due on Monday
Give me instead spaghetti with meatballs, and a big ol' hot fudge sundae
Bring me no more to the A/V studio where I must critique and analyze that
Bring me instead a fine young girl who I may entertain and make laugh
Give me no more disapproving glances for 30 seconds late
Give me no more written warnings
Give me a freakin' break
Let me pay no more for overpriced used books
Give me instead the books for free for having such damn good looks
Take back your written assignments and your twenty page syllabi
Give back my hours of sleep you plucked so that I may get some shut-eye

Of course where would I be without the nagging and grading, incessantly I'll add?
I'd be doomed forever to collect glass animals- a fetish, just a fad
I'd be stuck handing out fliers on the streets of Brooklyn, preaching God
Or scaring hungry pigeons for their tasty bread, now that's a dirty job
All my friends got nice jobs, guess I'll have to find new ones
I can afford my own hot dogs, I'll have to steal my overpriced buns

Take me away from this wicked vision, and place me back at school
Take back all the things I said, man was I a fool

So give me all the homework you want, point out mistakes I've made
Give me written assignments and thousand-word essays
Give me more ego-breaking flack for handing the paper in late
Take ten, no twenty points off for putting down the wrong date
Tell me earnestly I have more potential, or that my grade is at stake
Tell me all these things at once, but please oh please oh please oh pleeease
Tell me there's still summer break.

by Paul Melendy

THE EMPTY CHURCH

by Patrick Ryan

Home again
no longer a child guided by mother's hand
led past endless rows of people, gathered in silent prayer
heads turn in disdain of the late arrivals
eyes glued to the floor as I walk, third row to the right
the pastor speaks with passion and conviction
his eyes sparkle with love for all who attend
final prayer is spoken with relief in my heart
everyone leaves with hugs and warm spirits
a final glance at the pain-filled face of Christ
a tear rolls down my face, a last lingering moment
lost to the hustle and bustle of feet to their cars
Church bells echoing in my ears as I stand here
a man no longer a boy looking up at the altar
candles burn wax drips slowly down the sides
shadows falling casting an ominous glare onto the crucifix
I look around this empty church never feeling so loved
I drop to my knees and pray for the day I hold my faith close
knowing in my heart I'll never walk alone again
turning to leave I stop at the door
no more tears to bleed

I can see them, tottering on unsteady legs,
blank stares their sole guide.
Flags in regal purple adorn the motley fleet
That shall lead the dead to home.
I am simply staring out beyond the white curtain lace,
watching the end result of life's journey.
I can see a man walking out of the funeral parlor,
clutching a vibrantly cellophaned basket,
as if it is his only link to life.
The rest have bland stares.
I am merely hugging my cat,
explaining through my embrace
that this is all, this is all.
And I am crying, grieving unashamedly for the coffin bound stranger.
I see an Eldorado, a Lincoln, and they are all strangely black,
just as my soul is ebony these days, like the ash of an inhaled cigarette.
My heart feels as if it is bared and naked,
sitting in the middle of this city street,
enduring the stares of this harsh, worthless public.
My throat burns as I tearfully realize
how we are all like minute droplets,
simple puppets in this grand production.
And yet, we are not so funny, dangling helplessly
from threadbare strings.
The chiming bells carve into my soul,
and I sit, merely silent against the dusk,
breathing deeply.

SEVEN MINUTES

3:00-3:07 PM

(A WEEKDAY SERVICE AT
MURPHY'S HOME)

by Cristine M. DiMario

LIKE A ROSE

by Wesley Bitomski

The invisible scent of jasmine and lavender surround us as we walk together. Words dance from her lips like butterflies on a warm spring day, caressing my ears lovingly. Her face glows ever so brightly in the sun's yellow shine. And her hands...

If she is a flower, then her hands are her petals. They add to her speech with vibrant explosions of color. They are so soft, so delicate, it feels like a crime to hold them, but they are all I'll ever want to touch!

She is so full of wonder; her face is made of supple curves and breathtaking features, and mine is nothing but hard lines and sharp angles. As she walks with feminine grace, I stumble with brute force and the weight of my burdens. Her words are butterflies, and my voice is the deep tattoo of drums. And my hands...

My rough hard hands can never compare to her soft, tender petals. My hands are thorns, they are my tools. They sculpt the world to fit my design. They protect me and mine and hold my life together. Instead of grace, I wield power with my hands.

The contrast between us is deep. She is the definition of grace and beauty, I am a mere laborer. When these differences entwine like clasping hands, they form something dramatic and beautiful...

...Like a rose.



STACIE PETERS

TOMORROW

by Anthony Gan

what a dark hour.
what a warm and lovely dream.
there it was.
a sound like a murmur.
pronounced like a sleeping breath.
yet heard as a summer rain.
a summer shower.

CLOWN OF THE HOUR

I tell you about a blue blossom
and you gently dance through a stormy morning.

by Anthony Gan

There I am. A summer love consumes me...
and the dark evening teaches me how to listen.

Shall we love like this forever?
or leave the present moment to remember the odd, summer song.

Against the bare winter,
Love is unlimited.
With soft and tender glances
Winter engulfs every feeling with a chill.
A scarlet freeze is winter's fury
A shiver to mankind.

WINTER

by Erin Mulcahy

The October afternoon
Like a lover's cradle pillow voice
Lulled me into blessed forgetfulness

Only moments before
A less than casual glance
Left me set adrift and wondering

Soon the copper warmth
Of a neighboring street light
Will guide my reflections to their rest

by Dan Copeland

The thawing of the land
Littered with faded trends
Brings rebirth of spirit
Wings of sparkling newness
Beat back winter's echoes
As the mistress of the dawn
Casts her pink across the trees
Life awakens from brief slumber
And grows restless

by Dan Copeland



UNKNOWN

THE BOY WHO NEVER CRIED, “WOLF!”

by Linda Novotny

My name is Abe Staulker. I'm an old man although I wasn't always old. Fact is that when I was four something quite miraculous happened, but I never told anyone. I knew what happened and that was good enough for me — until now. I realize I'm going to die. I need to tell my story so it can live on.

I grew up with my grandfather in a small town called Montgomery, Minnesota. When people asked my grandfather where my parents were, he'd always say, "They died from a high fever when Abe was a few days old." I never told him I knew differently. Years after living with my grandfather, a local busybody informed me my parents got up one day and left me alone. They never came back. A neighbor heard me crying and called the sheriff. Living in a small town has some advantages. There was no need to contact any social services even if there had been such an agency. The sheriff knew whom I belonged to and where to take me. My grandfather seemed comfortable with the "Abe's parents are dead" story. And I loved my granddad. We had a good life together. And that was good enough for me.

We lived in a small house grandpa had built while a youth. He knew that house like the back of his hand. He did all the repairs - inside and out. He could do anything. And it was no accident that our house was located just down the road from a huge lake. We couldn't see the lake from the house, but we could hear the lake activity. In the summer, we could hear the fishermen at the crack of dawn (sometimes earlier) as they would get their fishing gear ready and put the boats in the water. In the evening, we could hear the loons as they would sing their woeful songs. And in the winter, we could hear as the ice would moan and groan, expanding and contracting. It sounded like it was trying to make itself comfortable in all that cold and just couldn't quite do it.

Together granddad and I would take care of our chores so we could head off to that lake and fish. Yes, we went fishing just about all year long. And I was proud that for as long as I could recall I was able to bait my own hook. Grandpa, since he was the adult, had certain responsibilities I just couldn't help him with - like paying the bills. But I could take care of my own fishing equipment, bait my own hook, and almost clean our catch. Even when we'd use leeches - those fat, squishy bloodsuckers—I'd stick my hand in the bucket, grab one (sometimes two), and bait my hook. Then I'd hope some fish that liked leeches more than I did would come along and get hooked.

It was February 1920; I'd just turned four a couple of weeks earlier. Grandpa and I weren't partiers, but we had a chocolate cake with candles to celebrate. Grandpa gave me a jig stick for ice fishing with a couple of new bobbers. I'd used one of grandpa's old jig sticks the other times we'd been out, but now I had one of my own. I was happy. So we set out that day, early afternoon, to do some open ice fishing. We weren't going to stay very long, so we didn't see any need to bring shelter. We were just going to chip a hole in the ice, drop a couple of lines, and wait for the fish to start biting.

Just as my granddad knew our house, he knew this lake. The weather had been sub-zero for a couple of weeks, and the ice would be several feet thick. We'd

be able to walk across the lake without any threat of breaking the ice with our weight. However, just to be safe, my grandfather would tie a rope around my waist and affix the other end to his belt. As he explained to me, any number of fishermen had already chipped holes in the ice. If I were to step into one of those holes, my arms would fly straight up and my small body would torpedo through the hole into the ice water. He'd heard of many people getting lost under the ice, unable to relocate the hole they'd fallen into. So, we would walk across the ice joined by a lifeline.

As we were walking, my boots would crunch into the thin layer of snow covering the ice. I loved to hear this special sound because in order to have this quality of crunchy snow the temperatures had to be really cold. And with this cold came a certain silence

that allowed me to actually hear each footstep in the snow. There was an occasional caw of a blackbird as it flew overhead and even that sound was amplified on days like these. I could even hear the snowflakes as they began to fall on my shoulders. The weather was warming up.

It was still snowing when we found the perfect location to begin chipping the ice. Granddad took off his heavy parka so he could swing the pickax and not get too sweaty doing it. Chipping through several feet of ice can take awhile. So I began to busy myself with the fishing equipment and bait. I had just opened the bait bucket when I heard a bang. It was difficult for me to judge this sound because grandpa was making quite a bit of noise himself. And grandpa just kept working, so I comforted myself with knowing if grandpa is ok, I am ok. But now

there was a rumbling ... under my feet. It felt like a locomotive was barreling down some underwater rail system and heading straight for us! Grandpa and I had just locked eyes when it happened.

It all happened so quickly. There wasn't any time to jump away or grab hold of anything. And to tell the truth, I closed my eyes. So all that was left were sensations. I could feel myself falling, or was I being lifted? It was hard to tell. I heard my grandfather make a loud grunt, but I couldn't tell what it meant. So many unfamiliar sensations - I was so confused, my head was spinning! And the noises were so loud on such an otherwise quiet afternoon.

Everything settled, and it did in probably no less than two minutes, although it seemed longer to me. I opened my eyes. I looked up. Above my head I could see the rope that grandpa and I used as a lifeline hanging over the edge of a sharp ice heave. I looked down. My feet were dangling about three feet above open water. I moved a little to look to the left and right. As I adjusted my weight I could feel the rope



DAVID MICHEL

give. The ice was beginning to splice the lifeline. So I held very still while I called out to my grandfather. Silence.

I didn't know at the time that my grandfather had stepped on the pickax when the ice shifted and knocked himself out. He was lying on the other side of the ice heave, unconscious. What I did know was my grandfather would answer me if he could. He was in trouble and needed me. But what could I do? I started to understand we were both in trouble and began to cry. It was the cry of a small boy who was trying to be brave.

On shore two sets of ears perked up at the sound of my muffled sobs. A large, gray wolf and his mate had journeyed over from the protected woodlands to rouse up some game. I had never seen a wolf before. The only information I had in my short lifetime about wolves was their howl that we sometimes heard late at night. So, when I saw those two powerful animals start inching their way across the ice toward me, I was unafraid. I saw them as my furry rescuers. And so they were.

They began sniffing the entire scene - the ice, the water, the rope, and my boots. Nothing escaped their noses. I can only imagine when they disappeared from my view they were sniffing my granddad's belt, pickax, and parka. If he'd injured himself, maybe they were licking his wounds.

When the two wolves returned to my side of the ice heave, they sat down, side-by-side. I could make out every detail of these two magnificent animals. They calmed me just by their patient silence. And then without any visible sign that I could detect, they started moving - each in its own direction. The smaller of the two wolves sprinted over to the shore and grabbed a downed tree branch. She held onto the branch with her strong teeth then tugged the branch with her broad head and powerful chest across the ice and placed it next to the open hole under my feet.

The big, gray, male animal disappeared. But I could feel a tugging on my lifeline and hear a slow, deep growl. What was he doing? Was he pulling or chewing on the fraying rope? I only know the next

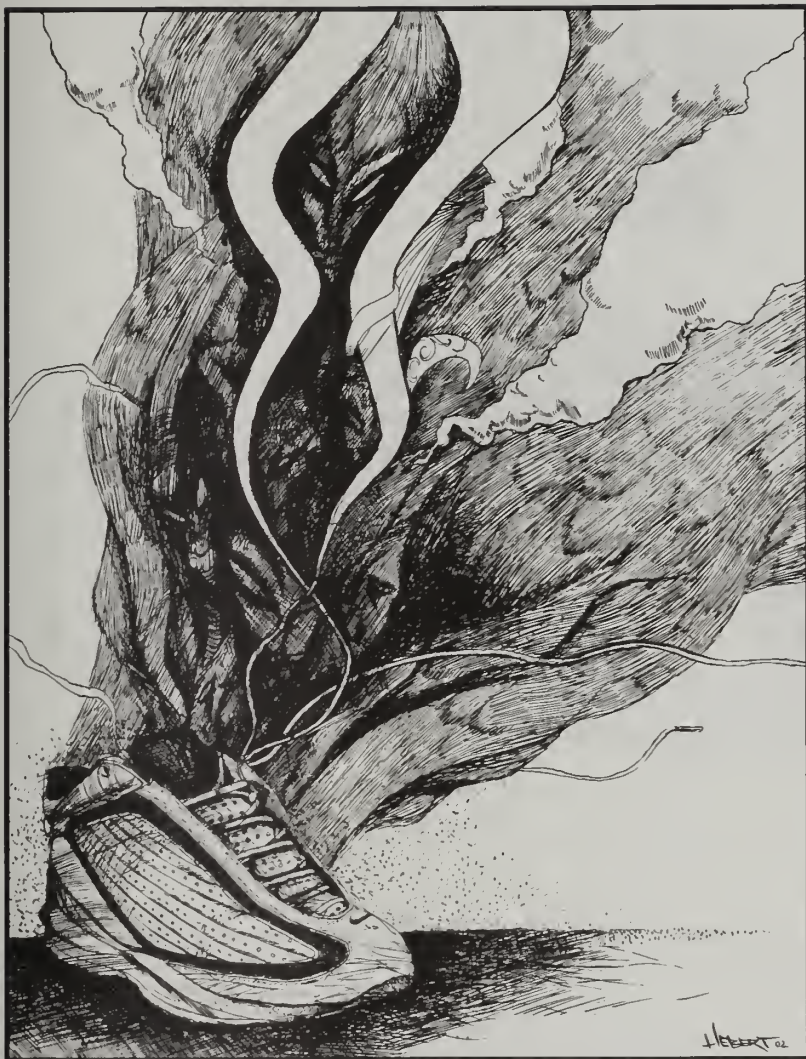
time I saw the big gray he was adjusting the tree branch across the hole and beginning to walk on it much like a balance beam. What were these beasts planning?

I was so fascinated by the big wolf's ability to balance on this tree branch that I barely noticed when the smaller wolf wandered over to the other side of the ice heave. I knew she was over there when once again there was a tugging on the lifeline. Then, as quickly as the ice heave had appeared, I was falling. The rope had snapped, releasing me from my lofty heights, and sent me flying down across the broad back of the big gray. I landed on ice with a teeth-shattering crash. My head was spinning and aching while I felt a sandpaper tongue lick my tear-stained face.

When I opened my eyes, I glimpsed my grandfather with his pickax raised above his bloodied head aiming for my friends who had just risked their own lives to save mine. Apparently, my grandfather had regained consciousness, and he thought I was being mauled by a couple of wild wolves. Quickly I shooed the wolves and they bolted to safety.

My grandfather scooped me to his chest and cried. I had never seen my grandfather cry before, so I tried to console him and reassure him I was never in danger. But he was in another world. A world I would grow to understand when I had children of my own.

Without any news coverage, the community learned of our plight and the near-death experience on that February day. There were no articles in the newspaper or broadcasts on any radio station, but everybody knew something about the events of that day nonetheless. My grandfather's heroism was beyond doubt. It became one of his favorite stories. Who was I, one of his most adoring fans, to question his version of what happened? And so, as I retell this story, I know that my grandfather was indeed my lifesaver, but on that particular snowy day in February, two brilliant, courageous wolves were my rescuers.



JONATHAN HEBERT

ELVIN FABIAN





JEANNE DUNNIGAN

SUBMISSION INFORMATION

The deadlines for submissions are March 25 (Spring Issue) and October 25 (Fall Issue). Submission boxes are located in Haverhill (outside C-317T) and Lawrence (in the Library). Artwork can be submitted to Ginger Hurajt in C-314A. Online submissions can be sent to ghurajt@necc.mass.edu. Submissions are accepted from current NECC students only.

All text and layout for this issue of Parnassus was accomplished on a Macintosh computer.

FONTS/POINT SIZE:

WINDSOR (60pt) - Titles

Lucinda Bright (10pt) - Poems

Palatino (11pt) - Stories

Windsor (11pt) - Authors

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